A GUIDE FOR THE PENITENT: OR A Modell drawn up for the help of a Devout Soul wounded with Sin.

Tertull.

Peccator omnium Notarum,
Et nulli Rei niſi pœnitentiæ natus.

LONDON,

Printed by *F. Fleſher*, for *R. Royſton* Bookſeller to his moſt Sacred *Majeſty*.

MDC LXIV.

GUIDE

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A Model drawn up for

the Help of a Devout

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Tertull.

Hoc ipsum exomologesis Græcum,

Et verbi hujus proprietatis natura.

LONDON,

Printed by J. Heptinstall, for R. Robson

TO THE
Chriſtian Reader.

AMong the ſo troubleſome multitude of Books, and the no leſs troubleſome ſcarcity of good ones, I have no reaſon to think this little Piece will much increaſe the number of the one, or not ſerve to balance the trouble of the other: but I rather hope it may be acceptable and uſefull, if either the great Eminence of the Author, or the Argument it ſelf, or elſe the ſmall bulk, which are things that uſe to render works of this kind conſiderable, be ſufficient either to recommend or excuſe it. For the neceſſity of the argument may recommend it not to moſt Readers onely, but very many Writers too. And

without doubt many of those who have been ambitious to put themselves into the number of Authors by publishing their abortive labours will need the Rules and Offices of this Manual, when their Conscience shall cite them to Repentance, and to ask God forgiveness for nourishing Faction, and sowing the seeds of Discord, and venting their crude Notions to others trouble and their own shame. For such men in the use of this little Enchiridion *may finde more comfort, and doe themselves and the Age more right, then in that small harvest of reputation their own voluminous labours could bring in, which are now very fitly preferred from the Closet to the more worthy ministeries of the Shop and Kitchin. But the most Reverend Author, to whose learned Piety thou oweſt these following assistences, who in the sweetness and mildness of these lines has expressed the features and lineaments of his own candid, serene Soul, did not address them for his own use in that kind. For that he was of the Highest Order of our Church, he did not owe to his Interest, which advances some, nor*

to

to his Money, which preferrs commonly too many, but wholly to his Vertues and his Learning, and thoſe other eminent Graces, that made his Example as great in the Church as was his Dignity. And this little Book is a great inſtance of his Humility and Charity, which he does in ſome kinde ſtill exerciſe, though he be now gone to receive his reward for them; and as he uſed to look into the neceſſities of indigent perſons to relieve them with his hand, ſo in this Portuiſe he deſcends to converſe with the weakneſſes and ſolitarineſs of humble Penitents, directing and improving their Devotions, and inſtigating their Repentance, and preparing a conſtant ſtore-houſe of relief for them by his Pen. And now if a Perſon ſo eminent in Grace, ſo innocent in Life, needed ſuch Exerciſes as this, (for what thou receiveſt here, know, Courteous Reader, it comes from his Counſel and from his daily Experience and Practice too) conſider whether thou thy ſelf art not concerned to bring thy actions and life to as ſevere a ſcrutiny and a Repentance as operative. If thou joyneſt with me in Opinion, here is a Directory ready

at hand: but if not, thou needest it so much the more. For our Sins, the less impression they make on our memory, the deeper they make on our Conscience; and he is in some cases the most guilty who presumes he is wholly innocent. Retract therefore that conceit, and betake thy self to thy Closet and the practice of this Book, and God bless it to thy benefit and his own glory.

A GUIDE FOR The Penitent.

Remembrances concerning the Examination of your Conſcience.

I.

YOu are to conſider the Neceſſity of this Duty. For if we take care that the Rooms which we eat or ſleep in ſhould be kept clean, you cannot but think that the cleanſing of the Soul is a Concernment infinitely beyond it: and for doing this there is no other way left but to ſearch out every corner of it, and to caſt out every Sin with every unclean thought that hath defiled it.

II.

You are to remember, that there is a great Meaſure of Diſcretion to be uſed in the Performance of this: ſo that you may neither omit it, when your own heart may tell you that there is ſomething amiſs in you, which muſt be look'd after; nor on the other ſide over-ſcrupulouſly purſue it when you are not conſcious to your ſelf of any notable Failings but ſuch as are incident to humane frailty: for if you do not wilfully paſs over any of your greater Offences, but confeſs particularly, and repent ſeriouſly of them, God will more eaſily paſs by your leſſer Infirmities, being ſuch as the Holy Prophet deſpaired of finding out, when he ſo ſadly complained, *Who can tell how oft he offendeth?*

III.

That though it may not only ſeem, but be impoſſible to you to recollect every failing, and that your ſcrupulous endeavouring of it may rather prove a Torture to the Conſcience then an Eaſe to it; yet you are ſo far to exerciſe an Inquiſition upon your ſelf, as by obſerving theſe leſſer particulars (though it be but in groſs) you may the better diſcover what the corruption of your Nature ſways you to; and having diſcovered it, you are bound to ſtrive to ſubdue it by degrees, and what you cannot

not for the preſent overcome, humbly to ask pardon for.

IV.

That though it be the Duty of every day not to let the Sun go down upon any Sin that you have committed, without examining of the Merits of it; yet there are Times when this ought to be more punctually and ſolemnly done, eſpecially at ſuch times as you ſet apart for humbling your Soul with Faſting, or for preparing your ſelf for the devout Receiving of the Sacrament.

V.

For the Manner of Ordering this Examination ſeveral Methods have been preſcribed: ſome by dividing the ſubject Matter of it into Thoughts, Words and Deeds; others as ſins are differenced by their ſeveral Objects, either as being immediately ſins againſt God, or againſt your Neighbour, or againſt your own Soul: Others adviſe to ſet God's Holy Commandments before you, and to examine by that Rule what you have done amiſs. But in the choice of this you may free your ſelf from all Perplexity by taking his Advice whom you ſhall chuſe to be your Spiritual Guide. And the Duty it ſelf being once reſolved upon, the Mode of doing may eaſily be found out.

Advice concerning Confeſſion.

I.

THat beſides this Examination of your Conſcience, (which may be done in ſecret between God and your own Soul) there is great uſe of Holy Confeſſion: which though it be not generally in all Caſes and peremptorily commanded; as if without it no Salvation could poſſibly be had; yet you are adviſed by the Church under whoſe diſcipline you live, that before you are to receive the Holy Sacrament, or when you are viſited with any dangerous ſickneſs, if you find any one particular ſin or more that lies heavy upon you, to diſburthen your ſelf of it into the Boſom of your Confeſſour, who not onely ſtands berween God and you to pray for you, but hath the power of the Keys committed to him, upon your true Repentance to Abſolve you in Chriſt's Name from thoſe ſins which you have confeſſed to him.

II.

You are to remember that you bring along with you to Confeſſion not onely unfeigned Sorrow and Remorſe of Conſcience for ſins paſt, but ſetled Reſolutions for the time to come never to offend in the ſame kinde again: for without this, Confeſſion is but a mere Pageant, and rather a mockery,

mockery of God, then any effectual means to reconcile you to him.

III.

That having made choice of ſuch a Confeſſor who is every way qualified that you may truſt your Soul with him, you are adviſed plainly and ſincerely to open your heart to him; and that laying aſide all conſideration of any perſonal weakneſs in him, you are to look upon him onely as he is a Truſtee from God, and commiſſioned by him as his Miniſterial Deputy to hear, and judge, and abſolve you.

IV.

That the Manner of your Confeſſion be in an humble poſture on your knees, as being made to God rather then man: and for the Matter of it, let it be ſevere and ſerious; but yet ſo as it may be without any inordinate Anxiety and unneceſſary Scruples, which ſerve onely to entangle the Soul, and in ſtead of ſetting you free (which is the benefit to be looked for by Confeſſion) perplex you the more.

V.

That for the frequency of doing this, you are to conſult with your own neceſſities: and as your Phyſician is not ſent for upon every ſmall diſtemper, which your own care may rectifie; ſo neither are you obliged

obliged upon every failing to be over-ſcrupulous, or to think it a point of Neceſſity preſently to confeſs it: For the Confeſſor cannot be always preſent, but your God is, to whom if you apply your ſelf with Praiers and Penitence, confeſſing in his ears alone what-ever you have done amiſs, and ſtedfaſtly believing that through the merits of your Saviour they ſhall never be imputed to you, you may be confident that your Abſolution is at that time ſealed in Heaven, but the comfortable Declaration of it you are to look for from the Prieſt.

Advice concerning Devout Receiving the Holy and Bleſſed Sacrament.

I.

YOU are firſt to conſider ſeriouſly the Infinite Love of your Saviour, who not onely offered himſelf for you as a Sacrifice upon the Croſs, but that this might never be forgotten by you, left the bleſſed memory of it in his Holy Sacrament, which as often as you devoutly and faithfully receive, you are effectually made Partaker of all the Merits of his precious Death and Paſſion.

II.

II.

That for the frequency of doing this (if your own Conſcience doth not ſpeak home to you) you refer your ſelf to your Spiritual Guide, who knowing the Temper of your Soul, and how you ſtand diſpoſed, may beſt direct you. Onely I ſhall adde this, that the oftner you apply your ſelf to doe it, your life will be the purer, your heart the chearfuller, and the better armed againſt all Temptations.

III.

That three times in the year at leaſt, eſpecially on thoſe ſolemn Feſtivals obſerved by all Chriſtians, who have not utterly caſt off Obedience to the Church, and order in their Devotions, you lay aſide all excuſes, and every Sin that then beſets you, and ſeriouſly prepare your ſelf for ſo great a Bleſſing.

IV.

That aſſoon as you wake that Morning, (and the ſooner you awake the better ſign it is that your minde is ſet upon it) you rouſe your ſelf up with a fervent expectation of Receiving that day the Bread that came from Heaven, which whoſoever is rightly partaker of, ſhall not periſh, but have life everlaſting.

V.

V.

As for the precedent daies of Preparation, how many they ſhould be, or how they ſhould be employed, you are to refer your ſelf to your Guide, who may adviſe you not to be over-ſcrupulous of the Time, (for the Primitive Chriſtians communicated every day;) and if your life be innocent from great offences, your Prepartion need not be long. Onely be ſure you bring with you Faith and Charity, clean hands and a penitent heart: which if you do, be confident the Maſter of the Feaſt will not finde fault with you for want of a wedding-Garment.

VI.

That upon the bleſſed day of your Receiving you do more vigorouſly prepare your ſelf, by lifting up your Heart and Hands to God, and offering up your private Praiers (fitted for that purpoſe with all poſſible Devotion.) And that being done, you may compoſe your ſelf in quiet and in ſilence, till the time of the Morning-Sacrifice be come; when being called to a more Publick Oratory, you may be the fitter to goe with an humble Confidence to meet your Saviour, and with that Ardour and Affection as a chaſt Virgin goes to an holy Marriage.

VII.

VII.

That during the Celebration of this Holy Sacrament you attend earneſtly to what is done by the Prieſt. When he breaks the Bread, imagine to your ſelf that you ſee the Body of your dear Saviour torn and crucified: and when he pours out the Wine, conſider that his Bloud was thus poured out upon the Altar of the Croſs: and laſt of all, when he that conſecrates ſhall ſtand before you ready in particular to apply it, you may then think that you ſee Chriſt himſelf reaching out his own body and bloud to you, to feed your Soul unto Eternal Life.

VIII.

That farther you are really to believe the words as they are ſpoken; *This is my Body, This is my Bloud:* and not to doubt but that it is effectually made good to you in the Receiving, without any diſpute at all, or ſcrupulous inquiring into the manner of it, which neither Chriſt hath revealed, and neither Men nor Angels are able to pry into.

IX.

That the Celebration of theſe Holy Myſteries being ended, you are to retire with all Thankfulneſs of heart for having been admitted to that Heavenly Feaſt, wherein your

your Saviour, who gave himſelf for you on the Croſs, hath now more particularly given himſelf to you in the Sacrament, never to depart from you, unleſs you again wilfully offend him; which you are the more earneſtly to beware, leſt by frequent Relapſes the Sacrament it ſelf prove not onely uſeleſs but dangerous to you, and your latter end prove worſe then your beginning.

Advice concerning Faſting.

I.

YOu are to conſider Faſting either as a Duty enjoyned by the Church, or as a voluntary undertaking of your own. Your Obedience is required to the former in every particular as far as it is enjoyned, unleſs the want of Health or ſome other Accidents may unavoidably hinder you, wherein not onely the Biſhop may diſpenſe with you, but he that hath the charge of your Soul, eſpecially if the Neceſſity be evident.

II.

Beſides the ordinary Faſts preſcribed by the Church, you are adviſed to ſet aſide ſome Day, either Weekly or (at leaſt) Monthly, wherein you may mourn in private, not onely for your own ſins and perſonal calamities, but for thoſe publick Judgments now fallen on the whole Church and

and Nation, and thoſe crying ſins which have occaſioned them; offering up your earneſt praiers to God for the removing of them, which, when they come from a mortified Body and a contrite Heart, are ſuch a Sacrifice that God, (who deceives no man) being true to his Promiſes, cannot poſſibly deſpiſe.

III.

That the Faſt for the time deſigned be ſuch as may in ſome meaſure be afflictive to you, abſtaining totally that day from all manner of food, if the condition of your health will bear it; or if that cannot be, that you be ſo moderate in your feeding, that it may appear that you rather ſerve your Neceſſities in eating then ſatisfie your Appetite.

IV.

That you employ this Day (or ſuch a part of it (at leaſt) as you may keep free to your ſelf) as a Retreat from the world, the buſineſſes and the pleaſures of it, that ſo you may with the more freedom make up the Accounts between God and your own Soul, and by Praier and Penitence reconcile your ſelf to him; for without this, Faſting is of no uſe.

Expreſ-

Expreſſes of Humiliation preparatory to the following Devotions.

RIghteouſneſs, O Lord, belongs unto thee; but unto me confuſion of face, the vaineſt, the vileſt, the ſinfulleſt of all the children of men.

Lord, I am vile in mine own eyes, and I will be yet more vile, becauſe my ſins have made me vile in thine.

I am not worthy of the Air I breath, of the Earth I tread upon, or of the Sun that ſhines upon me; much leſs worthy to lift up either hands or eyes to Heaven.

For thou haſt ſaid that no unclean thing ſhall come within thy ſight: and how then ſhall I appear, who am ſo miſerably defiled?

If the Man according to thine own heart could ſay that he was a Worm, and no Man, O what am I?

If *Abraham*, who had the honour to be called thy Friend, could ſay that he was but Duſt and Aſhes, O what am I?

O my God, thou madeſt me of nothing; and thou ſeeſt how I have ſpoiled this work of thine, for I have made my ſelf worſe then nothing. For

For I am ſtill in my Sins, and what to doe I know not.

Acts of Reſolution to ſecond this Humiliation.

But this I will doe;

I Will confeſs my wickedneſs, and be ſorry for my ſins.

I will ſtand aloof with the *Publican*, and ſmite my breaſt, and ſay, Lord, be merciſull to me a ſinner.

I will return with the Prodigal, and ſay, Father, I am not worthy to be called thy Child; make me as one of thine hired Servants.

I will not ſuffer mine eyes to ſleep, nor mine eye-lids to ſlumber, till I have by the mediation of thy dear Son obtained my pardon.

And what ſhall I ſay more? I will pour out my praiers in the bitterneſs of my Spirit; and if my dry eyes want Tears, I will call unto my heart for Tears of Bloud, wherewith I may ſupply them.

And therefore now, Lord, call my ſins to my remembrance: and when thou haſt done

done so, blot them out of thy remembrance, and pardon me.

A Litany of Confession to be made use of by the Penitent Soul that finds it self burthened with a true sense of Sin.

I.

WO, Wo unto me, O God, that being a Creature of thine, and made by thee capable of enjoying everlasting felicity, I have lived so wickedly and leudly, that, unless thy mercy prevent it, I shall utterly forfeit the very End of my Creation.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am utterly ashamed of it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

II.

Wo unto me, O God, that I have trifled away so many of my Youngest daies without knowing thee, or taking any notice of those strict duties which I did owe unto thee; that I was so long a Child in all things, excepting Innocence, and that onely by an over-hasty Spring of early Wickedness I was more then a Child.

But

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I Accuse, and Judge, and Condemn my self for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

III.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that as I grew up, the seeds of Corruption which I brought with me into the world grew up along with me, and by insensible degrees (which I observed not) Pride and Folly and Lust took possession of me, and Sin hath reigned in my mortal Body.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am infinitely confounded at it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

IV.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that being washed in the Waters of Baptism from the guilt of that Original Corruption which I brought with me into the World, I have since that time so many waies actually defiled myself, that I can no longer pretend by any former contract with thee, that I am either a Child of thine, a member of thy Christ, or an heir of the Kingdom of Heaven.

But

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am utterly confounded at it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

V.

Wo unto me, O God, that having been received into the Bosom of thy Church (which so many millions of Souls have not had the happiness to be so) I have ingratefully dishonoured thy holy Faith by an unholy Life; and having so often confessed thee with my tongue, I have denied thee in my life and actions.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I Accuse, and Judge, and Condemn my self for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

VI.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that having abjured the Devil and all his works, and given up my name to Christ, to fight under the Banner of his Cross, I have on the contrary treacherously complied with his Enemy in many things, and shall be found (I fear) to have been more diligent in serving him, then I have been in serving thee.

But

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am confounded and aſtoniſhed at it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

VII.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that being obliged by that high calling of being a Chriſtian, to renounce the Pomps and Vanities of the World, I have ſo infinitely failed in this, that I have doted on nothing more: for thoſe very Vanities have been my Idols, and my ſeduced Heart hath gone a-Whoring after them.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am aſhamed and confounded at it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

VIII.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that being farther bound by that moſt Solemn Vow, utterly to forſake the ſinfull Luſts of the Fleſh, I have, inſtead of forſaking them, purſued and hunted after them, and when other temptations have failed, have been apt enough to kindle my own Fire, and to be a Tempter to my ſelf.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I hate, and loath, and abhor my ſelf for it.

Lord,

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

IX.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that knowing thy revealed Will to be the Law to which I was bound in all obedience to submit my self, I, like an Insolent Rebel, have not onely set up my own Will in opposition to thine, but many times preferred it before thine, and have listned more to the false Oracles of Flesh and Bloud then to all thy Holy Commandments.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I Accuse, and Judge, and Condemn my self for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

X.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that being made according to thine Image (the greatest honour that could be done thy Creature) I have dashed so many blurs and spots and foul sins upon it, so defaced all the lines and features of it, that unless the Holy Spirit please to renew that Image in me again, I tremble to think what I must one day hear, Depart from me, I know you not.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am ashamed and confounded at it.

Lord,

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XI.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that having received a Rational Soul from thee, to be a Moral Light and guide unto my actions, I have been ſo brutiſh as to follow my ſenſual appetite in ſtead of it, and have made no farther uſe of Reaſon then to find out vain excuſes to cozen my own Soul into all the by-waies of Sin and Error.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I Accuſe, and Judge, and Condemn my ſelf for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XII.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that being endowed with Memory to ſerve as a Magazine to treaſure up thy Precepts and holy Counſels in, I have ſtuft it ſo miſerably full with the Ideas of former Vanities and Sin, that I have left no room for thee at all.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I infinitely condemn my ſelf for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XIII.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that having received a Heart from thee to be the ſeat of clean and holy affections, and the onely Temple for thy holy Spirit to dwell in, I have ſo unworthily abuſed and altered the property of it, that it is now become a Den of Thieves, and an unhandſome receptacle of all uncleanneſs.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I hate, and loath, and abhor my ſelf for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XIV.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that my wretched Heart being corrupted, my Imagination hath run wildly after with a ſwarm of vain and ſinfull Thoughts, which, like importunate Flies, being driven away light again and again upon my diſtracted Soul, and intermingle with the beſt of my Devotions.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am infinitely troubled & grieved for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XV.

XV.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that mine Eyes being greedy after Vanity, have been upon all occaſions as open windows to let in Sin; but when by the ſame way they ſhould have iſſued out Penitential Tears, to waſh away the ſtains thoſe Sins had made, there hath been no paſſage found for them.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am inwardly grieved and deplore my ſelf for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XVI.

Wo, Wo unto me, O my God, that for the entertaining of vain converſation, I have left mine Ears too often open to light and vain and ſinfull diſcourſes, and in all my inquiries have hearkened more to what the world ſaith abroad, then to what thy holy Spirit and my own Conſcience ſaith within me.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I Accuſe, and Judge, and Condemn my ſelf for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XVII.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that I have not reſolved, with thy ſervant *David*, to take care of my waies, that I offend not in my Tongue, but have many times vainly and inconſiderately let it looſe, and, either to pleaſe the Company or my ſelf, I have ſpoken words which might unhappily prove occaſions of ſin both to them and me, without regard, or remembring how great Flames ſuch little Sparks might kindle.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I do infinitely condemn my ſelf for it.
Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XVIII.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that all the parts and faculties of my Soul and Body have been abuſed, and have not ſerved the Laws of their Creator, but have ſo eagerly and conſtantly purſued the corrupt deſires of a ſeduced Heart, that I have cauſe to fear that either my whole life may be looked upon as one continued ſin, or at leaſt as having admitted ſo few inconſiderable Pauſes, that if thou ſhouldeſt enter into ſtrict Judgment with me, I ſhould not have the confidence to ſay when, or where, or wherein I have been innocent.

But

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am confounded and aſtoniſhed at it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XIX.

Wo unto me, O God, that I have wretchedly failed even in my beſt endeavours, that I have been cold in my Devotions, weary of my Praiers, inconſtant to good purpoſes, dull and heavy in the way to Heaven, but quick and active in all the waies of ſin, having made it the whole buſineſs of my life, rather to ſeem to be Religious, then really to be ſo.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I Accuſe, and Judge, and Condemn my ſelf for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XX.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that I have not waſhed mine hands in Innocency, when I have gone unto thine Altar, nor made mine heart ready to receive the bread that came from Heaven, but have failed in my Preparations, and have not ſufficiently conſidered either mine own unworthineſs, or the high ſecrets of ſo great a Myſtery.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am grieved and troubled at it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XXI.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that having ſo often received thoſe ineſtimable Pledges of thy love, the precious Body and Bloud of thy dear Son in the Holy Sacrament, I have been ſo unwary as to admit my former ſins under the ſame roof with thee, and have unhappily done what lay in me to drive thee from me.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am infinitely aſhamed at it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XXII.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that my Repentance, the onely plank left me in the Shipwreck of my Soul, hath been ſo weak, ſo ſlight, and ſo unſteady, that every ſmall blaſt of a new Temptation hath been able to drive me from it, and by frequent Relapſes into ſin, gives me cauſe enough to repent, even of my vain repentance.

But I Repent again, O God, again I Repent.

I hate,

I hate, and loath, and abhor my ſelf for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XXIII.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that having received my Life and Being and Preſervation from thee, with ſo many advantages to have made me happy in this world, and bleſſed in the next, I have been ſo abominably unthankfull, that I have caſt all theſe thy Bleſſings behind me, and returned thee nothing back for all thy favours, but affronts, and injuries, and ſins.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am confounded and aſtoniſhed at it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XXIV.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that being Redeemed by the Death and Paſſion of thy dear and onely Son, I have not laid his bitter Agonies to heart, nor made right uſe of the precious Ranſome which was laid down for me: That I have not yet ſued out my Pardon with ſuch Penitent Tears as thou requireſt, nor laid hold of the benefits of it by a lively Faith; but have choſen rather ſtupidly to continue in my Sins, and to neglect the Bloud of the Covenant as an unholy thing.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I hate, and loath, and abhor my ſelf for it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XXV.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that thy Holy Spirit I have grieved, thy Counſels I have rejected, thy Motions I have quenched, and have entertained the Luſts and Vanities of this life with far more earneſt and paſſionate affections then all thy Holy Inſpirations.

But I Repent, O my God, I Repent.
I am utterly aſhamed and confounded at it.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

XXVI.

Wo, Wo unto me, O God, that having thus far opened my guilty heart before thee, I have left ſo many Sins behind that I cannot number them; ſome that I have really forgot, ſome that I would forget, if my Conſcience would give me leave; Sins known, that I cannot conceal, and ſins ſecret, ſuch as I have taken ſo much care to hide from others, that they are now become hidden from my ſelf.

But whatſoever they are, or whereſoever they are Regiſtred, whether in my own Con-

Conſcience or in any other Record, that may be proved againſt me in the day of Judgement.

I call the whole Court of Heaven to witneſs,
That I do ſadly Repent my ſelf of them all;
That I do abhor my ſelf for them all;
That I reſolve ſtedfaſtly to renounce them all.

Lord, be thou mercifull to me a Sinner.

Amen. Amen.

The Penitent Soul having made this or the like Confeſſion, prepares and ſtirs up it ſelf to true Contrition.

WHat ſhall I ſay more unto thee, O thou that art the Judge of the whole Earth? or what ſhall I doe more? I have ranſacked my breaſt and laid it open; I have ſpread it before thee, as *Hezekiah* the blaſpheming Letter of his Enemy. I do not deſire that there ſhould be ſo much as any fold, or pleight, or corner of it hidden from thee.

Or if this be not enough to tranſact this great buſineſs of my Soul between me and

thee alone, and that possibly I may flatter my self in the several acts of my intended Penitence, I am ready to goe farther, and (to make my self the more ashamed of sinning) with all humility to confess these sins of mine to some of those servants of thine whom thou hast placed between me and thee, and to whom alone under thee thou hast so clearly given the power of Absolution.

O deal with me then as thou didst with thy servant *David*, who no sooner confessed his sins, but thou forgavest him all his iniquities.

But are there not they who confess their sins, and have the impudence to glory in them, or at least pass them over without any act of real Contrition, or any remorse at all?

But, O my God, (if my heart deceive me not) I am none of those; for I can neither glory in my shame, nor can I be satisfied with my self when I appear with dry eyes before thee.

After this Preparation theſe Expreſs Acts of Contrition may follow.

FOR I am grieved, O my God, I am grieved paſſionately, heartily grieved that ever I offended thee.

That I, the work of thy hands, have ſinned againſt thee my Maker.

That I, the price of thy Bloud, have ſinned againſt thee my *Jeſus*, who hadſt ſo much love for me as to be content to die for me.

That I, the choſen Temple of thy Holy Spirit, have ſinned againſt him who ſanctified me.

For this I grieve, and mourn, and my heart is wounded within me.

And having done all this, yet I have not done; for ſtill I am grieved: grieved that I can grieve no more, that my Head is not a continual Spring, and mine Eyes Fountains of Tears.

Wo is me, wretch as I am, that I who have been ſo eaſie, ſo forward, ſo eager to ſin,

ſin, ſhould be now ſo untoward, ſo heavy, ſo unable to repent.

Wo is me, that I ſhould be ſtill ſo drowſie, ſo dead aſleep in ſin, that I ſhould not be yet awake, and ſenſible of the condition I am in.

O that I had died before my unworthy Soul had given way to thoſe firſt ſins, which have drawn ſo foul a Train after them.

But, O my God, though I cannot wait on thee among the Innocent, yet deny me not a room among the Penitent.

Remember, O my God, that though *Ahab* had ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs, yet becauſe he Prai'd, and Faſted, and humbled himſelf before thee, thou hadſt ſo much regard even of this outward Penitence of his, as to promiſe not to bring the evil upon him in his daies.

But, Lord, if my heart deceive me not, I do not only outwardly and ſeemingly, but really and cordially Repent.

And therefore for the evil that I have deſerved, O my God, rather let the puniſhment light upon me in this world then in the next.

Rather

Rather let me perform the Penance of my Tears here, then reſerve it for that ſad time, when a whole Sea of Tears will doe no good.

And having ſaid all this, if my Repentance be yet imperfect, (as I know it cannot but want many grains, if weighed in this juſt balance) let the bitter Sufferings of thy dear Son *Jeſus* be caſt into the Scale, and then I ſhall not fear if thou enter into Judgment with me.

But of my ſelf, O God, I am utterly unable, and which way to ſatisfie thee I know not.

I dare not ſay ſo much as the Servant in the Goſpel did, *Maſter, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.* But rather, Maſter, have patience with me, for I can pay thee nothing at all, unleſs thy bounty be ſo great as to give it me to pay thee.

I can Faſt from a meal ſometimes, (though it be with much a doe) and I can Pray, though coldly enough; and if the fit and qualm of my Devotion holds out longer, I can ſtrain for a Tear or two to ſprinkle upon my dry Devotions.

But ſhould I faſt my ſelf into Air and Emptineſs, and weep my ſelf into Wa-

ter,

ter; ſhould I tear the skin from this ſinfull Fleſh of mine, I ſhould never be able to ſatisfie for the leaſt of thoſe Millions of Millions of ſins which, through the ſeveral moments of my life, either ignorantly or knowingly, weakly or wilfully, I have ſinned againſt thee.

What I have tranſgreſſed againſt others, I am not onely ſorry for, but ready, as far as my power will reach, to ſatisfie. But for my ſins againſt thee, my God, I muſt lay my hand upon my mouth for ever, for I have nothing to return or anſwer.

But the comfort is (and bleſſed ſhall be my Soul, if rightly I lay hold on it) that it is thou, O my bleſſed *Jeſu*, who haſt ſatisfied for me, one drop of whoſe bloud is enough to ſatisfie for the ſins of a thouſand worlds.

And this being ſo, will thy offended Father be ſo rigorous as to require the ſame paiment again? Eſpecially will he require it of me, a poor, a broken, and a bankrupt Sinner?

Canſt thou exact the utmoſt farthing of him who hath not a mite of his own to pay thee?

The

The Tranſition which the Penitent makes from the Acts of Contrition to the Acts of Reſolution for amendment of life, without which all ſorrow for ſin is in vain.

BUT becauſe by thy infinite Mercy, O my God, thou haſt ſatisfied for me already, ſhall I therefore fold my Arms, and ſit down and doe nothing towards it? Or, which is worſe, ſhall I goe on? Shall I continue in my Sins that Grace may abound.

Now God forbid.

No, I here reſolve rather to die the Death, then ever wilfully to ſin againſt thee more.

I do here reſolve utterly to avoid the temptations and approaches towards thoſe former ſins, which have hitherto ſo miſerably betraied me.

I do here reſolve (thy holy Spirit aſſiſting me) upon all the duties of a new life; to be hereafter more wary in my waies, and more conſtant to good reſolutions, to love thee above all the pleaſures and intereſts of this life, and ſadly to conſider what an infinite

finite loſer I ſhould be, if to gain all that my corrupt heart deſires I ſhould loſe thee:

If after all this I ſhould be ſo miſerably forgetfull both of my ſelf and thee, as ſhamefully to relapſe into any of thoſe ſins which I have now repented of.

I do here once more reſolve to abhor and loath my ſelf for it, and not to let my Conſcience ſleep, or admit of any reſt, till I have with bitter Tears and a ſharp reiterated Repentance obtained my pardon.

Having thus far made his Reſolution, the Penitent betakes himſelf to Praier.

AND now, O thou great ſearcher of all Hearts, who ſeeſt that I am of my ſelf weak and mutable, and no better then a Reed ſhaken with the winde, O ſhew thy ſtrength in my weakneſs: faſten and confirm me in theſe good purpoſes, and ſo binde them with Cords unto thine Altar, that I may never ſtart from thee more, or be any longer of that Herd, whoſe good reſolutions are as a dream in the night; or if they laſt longer, they are but as the next morning dew, and as ſoon vaniſh away.

O give

O give me the Reſolution of thy Servant Joſhua; *I and my houſe will ſerve the Lord.*

O give me the Heart of thy Servant David, *who ſo paſſionately makes his Proteſtations:*

I will take no wicked thing in hand, I hate the ſins of unfaithfulneſs, there ſhall no ſuch cleave unto me.

I will walk in my houſe with a perfect heart.

I have ſworn, and am ſtedfaſtly purpoſed to keep thy righteous Judgments.

Lord, I am not able to think one of theſe good thoughts without thee, much leſs to reſolve upon them.

But I, who without thee am able to doe nothing, may venture to ſay as thine Apoſtle did, that in thee I am able to doe all things.

Lord, give me the ſtrength to doe what thou requireſt, and then require of me what thou pleaſeſt.

Amen.

After

After these Resolutions the Penitent prepares himself with an humble Soul and bended knees to beg Pardon.

O The God of my life, and the unexhausted Fountain of Mercy which can never be drawn dry, I have now by the assistence of thy holy Spirit gone through (though with weak and trembling steps) the whole exercise of Repentance: for I have confessed my sins, and thou hast promised (upon my confession of them) not to impute them to me; I have gone one step farther, for I have repented of my sins, and thou hast promised again that upon my repentance thou wilt remember them no more; and because thy Holy Word hath taught me that a new life is the onely life of a true Repentance, I have this day in thy sight, and in the presence of all the holy Angels that attend thee in the Conversion of a Sinner, made my firm resolution never to fall again into the sins which I have repented of.

And now what remains for a poor Penitent to doe more, but humbly and earnestly to beg thy Pardon?

The Penitent's Praier.

O God the Father, who canſt not be thought ſo cruell as to make me onely to deſtroy me,

Have mercy on me.

O God the Son, who knowing thy Father's Will, didſt make it thy buſineſs to come into the world to ſave me,

Have mercy on me.

O God the Holy Ghoſt, who to the ſame end didſt ſanctifie me in my Baptiſm, and haſt ſo often ſince breathed holy thoughts and motions on me,

Have mercy on me.

O Holy and Bleſſed and Glorious Trinity, whom in three Perſons I adore as my one and onely true God,

Have mercy on me.

Hear me, O Lord.
Help me, O Lord.
Save me, or elſe I periſh.

Lord, careſt thou not that I periſh? Thou that wouldeſt have all men ſaved? Thou who wouldeſt have none to periſh?

And wilt thou now ſhew thine anger againſt

gainſt a Worm, againſt a Leaf, againſt a Vapour that vaniſheth before thee?

O remember how ſhort my time is, and deliver not my Soul into the Power of Hell.

For, alas! what profit is there in my Bloud? or who ſhall ever give thee thanks in that bottomleſs pit?

No, let me live in thy ſight; let me live, O my God, that my Soul may praiſe thee.

Forget me as I have been diſobedient, provoking thee to anger; and regard me as I am diſtreſſed, crying out to thee for help.

Look not upon me as I am a Sinner, but conſider me as I am thy Creature.

A Sinner I am, I confeſs, a Sinner of no ordinary ſtrain; but let not this hinder thee, O my God, for upon ſuch Sinners thou getteſt the greateſt glory.

O remember for whoſe ſake it was that thou cameſt from the boſome of thy Father, and didſt let thy ſelf down ſo low as to be content to be born of thine own humble handmaid.

Remember for whom it was that thy tender Body was Torn, and Scourged, and Crucified, and thy precious Bloud ſhed.

Was it not for the ſins of the whole world? and ſhall I be ſo narrow-hearted to my own Soul, or ſo injurious to thy Glory, as to think that in all this crowd thou haſt particularly excepted me?

Or, which is as great a diſhonour to thee, can I poſſibly imagine that thou diedſt one-

ly

ly for Sinners of a lower kinde, and leſteſt ſuch as I am without remedy?

What had become then of him who filled *Jeruſalem* with Bloud? What of the noted Woman who had lived in a trade of Sin? Nay, what had become of thine own Diſciple who with Oaths and Curſes thrice denied thee?

O how eaſie is it for thee to forgive? for it is thy Nature.

How proper is it for thee to ſave? for it is thy Name.

How ſuitable is it to thy onely End of coming into the World? for it is thy Buſineſs.

And when I conſider that I am the chief of Sinners, may I not urge the Father, and ſay; Shall the very chief of thy buſineſs be left undone?

Mercy, Mercy, good Lord.

I ask not of thee any longer the things of this world; neither Power, nor Honours, nor Riches, nor Pleaſures. No, my God, diſpoſe of them to whom thou pleaſeſt, ſo that thou giveſt me Mercy.

O that I could hear thee once ſay, as thou didſt to him in the Goſpel, *My Son, be of good chear, thy Sins are forgiven thee.*

How would my drooping Spirits revive at ſuch a Sound? and my now wounded Soul break forth into Hymns and Praiſes and Hallelujahs for a Mercy ſo utterly undeſerved of me, and which the Angels

which

which fell could never hear of?

But, O my weak Soul, what doſt thou fear? or what doſt thou ſcruple at? For thou art not yet in ſuch a deſperate condition, but thou maiſt expect that what was ſaid to him may poſſibly be ſaid to thee.

Nay, be confident (though it be with a mixture of fear and trembling) that if thou doſt not act the part of an Hypocrite all this while, thy Saviour ſtands ready at the very doors of thy Heart, to breath the very ſame words in a heavenly whiſper to thee; *Be of good chear, thy Sins are forgiven thee.*

Return then unto thy reſt, O my Soul, for thy Sins are forgiven thee.

Onely take this Counſel along with thee, *Sin no more, leſt a worſe thing fall unto thee.*

O that I could never ſin againſt thee more; never purpoſely, deliberately, wilfully ſin againſt thee more.

And for thoſe ſins of daily Incurſion, thoſe over-familiar corruptions of my nature, which thou haſt not yet given me ſtrength enough to conquer; Lord, either ſubdue them to me by degrees, or lay them not to my charge.

But wherein ſoever my Conſcience moſt accuſeth me, therein, O my God, be thou moſt mercifull unto me.

Save me, O God, as a Brand ſnatched out of the Fire.

Re-

Receive me, O my Jeſu, as a Sheep that hath wandred, but is now returned to the great Shepherd and Biſhop of my Soul.

The Jubile of the Penitent Soul after the ſenſe of Pardon obtained.

REjoice over me, O God the Father, that this thy Child was loſt, but is found, was dead, but is alive again.

Rejoice over me, O God the Son, that thy loud Cries and Tears, and bitter Agonies which for my ſake thou enduredſt upon the Croſs, were not ſo unhappily loſt, as to be caſt away in vain upon me.

Rejoice over me, O God the Holy Ghoſt, that thy ſo many ſecret and powerfull touches have at laſt got the upper hand of me.

Rejoice over me, O ye holy Angels, a great part of whoſe Miniſtery it is, to rejoice at the Converſion of a Sinner.

Rejoice over thy ſelf, O my Soul, that thou haſt received ſo much grace from Heaven this day, as ſadly to confeſs thy Sins, ſeriouſly to repent of them, and ſtedfaſtly to reſolve never to be guilty more of ſo much brutiſhneſs, as to be likened to the Dog that returns to his Vomit, or to the Swine wallowing in the Mire.

The

The Penitent closeth all with this short Praier.

LEt this day, O my God, be noted in thy Book.

Do not thou forget my Praiers, nor suffer me to forget my Resolutions.

For though I am weak, though I am unworthy, though I am unprofitable, yet I am thy Servant.

And here upon my bended Knees I humbly beg of thee, that I may live and die so.

Lord, hear my Praiers, and let my cry come unto thee.

Lord, pardon my Praiers, and let not my coldness and wandrings and infinite unworthiness turn them into Sin.

Lord, hear my Praiers, and let my cry come unto thee.

Amen, Amen.

FINIS.